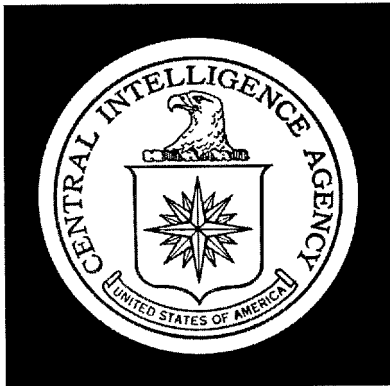


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*Jordan: King Husayn has reaffirmed his support for Prime Minister Tal, following the cabinet's resignation yesterday, by having him form a new government.

Husayn had been considering replacing Tal but more recently has been unwilling to do so lest he appear to be surrendering to popular pressure, particularly from Palestinian west Jordan, where antipathy toward Tal is strongest.

The King also dismissed the Chamber of Deputies, which had indicated its opposition to Tal. These steps appear to be part of the "broad solution" of Jordan's current political problems which Husayn had in mind last week.



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Tal's leadership of a new government comes on the eve of the United Arab Command meeting in Cairo on 24 December, during which the arrangements for moving Iraqi and Saudi troops into Jordan are to be discussed. Tal's retention as prime minister is certain to antagonize Egypt, which has been highly critical of him in recent weeks. If Jordan tries to evade its commitment to accept foreign troops at the Cairo meeting, the Egyptian and Syrian propaganda onslaught against Amman will become even more intense.



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Italy: Strains within the Christian Democratic and Socialist partnership are again becoming evident.

On 20 December, Socialist deputies, with Communist and probably some Christian Democratic support, forced through legislation opposed by the majority of the Christian Democrats. The measure itself, on olive oil subsidies, involves a technical issue with no direct implications for the stability of the government, but the confrontation over it has further strained the partnership.

The Socialists are dissatisfied at the slow pace of the government's legislative program. Some of them are advocating withdrawal from the "do-nothing" coalition before the 1968 elections. Among the Christian Democrats, personal jealousies against Premier Moro persist, and there is some talk that the party would gain an advantage by forcing early elections.

Responsible leaders in both parties want to keep the coalition together until 1968. Mutual grievances, however, will come to the fore in January at a top-level meeting to establish priorities for the legislative program. Unless the political atmosphere cools, the government will face a major test at that time.

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Bahamas: Political grievances and mounting labor unrest in the Bahamas are causing concern to authorities in Nassau and London.

The Bahamas are preparing to elect a new government on 10 January. The election was called following widespread allegations that some of the ministers of the ruling United Bahamian Party had been using their official position to further their private business interests, particularly in gambling concessions. Representatives of the opposition Progressive Labor Party (PLP) have asked for an investigation by a royal commission. Governor Grey flew to London this week at the request of the Colonial Office to discuss the situation.

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The PLP suffered badly in the last election in 1962 as a result of gerrymandering, and probably expects the same fate this time.

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Discontent based on economic, social and racial factors could be easily exploited.

A strike of construction and electrical workers which may spread to other key unions is another element of tension.

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NOTES

USSR: Moscow is making token allocations of wheat to food deficit countries from this year's excellent harvest, which it has supplemented by continued purchases from Canada. India has just announced that it will receive a gift of 200,000 tons from the USSR. Earlier, the Soviet Union had agreed to sell 200,000 tons to Algeria and up to 250,000 tons to Egypt. Even with these allocations and larger deliveries to Eastern Europe this year, the USSR still has substantial stocks. [REDACTED]

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Communist China - Australia: Peking's grain purchases for import during the first half of 1967 may reach a record total of four million tons. Australia is already scheduled to supply 1.5 million tons, and Peking is asking Canberra for as much more, apparently also for delivery in the first half of the year. Canada is committed to supply about 900 thousand tons during the same period. There are indications that the Chinese are looking for still more.

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